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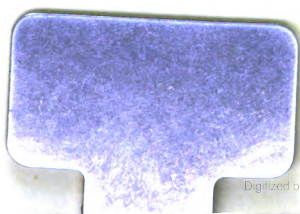
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Per Jesum Christum

Francis Browning
D. Bickerstaffe-
Drew (count.)



PER JESUM CHRISTUM;

OR,

Two Good Fridays.

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

BY

F. B. DREW BICKERSTAFFE DREW.



R. WASHBOURNE,
18 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON.
1881.

2533. f. 36.



TO
THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS
I OFFER THIS
IN LOVE AND REPARATION.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

1. OREMUS.
 2. DOMINUS VOBISCUM.
 3. PATER NOSTER.
 4. PER JESUM CHRISTUM.
 5. VENI CREATOR.
 6. CREDO.
 7. AVE MARIA.
 8. ORA PRO NOBIS.
 9. CORPUS CHRISTI.
 10. DEI GENITRIX.
 11. REQUIEM.
 12. MISERERE.
 13. DEO GRATIAS.
 14. GUARDIAN ANGEL.
-

R. WASHBOURNE, 18 PATERNOSTER ROW,
LONDON.



PER JESUM CHRISTUM;
OR,
TWO GOOD FRIDAYS.

CHAPTER I.

THOSE of you who have read the Little Book of St. Nicholas called 'Pater Noster,' will perhaps remember hearing in it of a young man whose name was Tempest. Well, then, in this story I am going to tell you something more about him, and something also about the friend in whose company he was when first he fell in with Charles.

It was a very beautiful spring morning, two years after Charles had found a home and rest in the great Catholic Church of Christ. All

London was keeping holiday, and half London was making merry far away in fields and country-places, for it was Good Friday. And through the streets Bertrand Tempest was hurrying along, in the direction of his friend Tresilian's rooms in Brook Street.

It was about nine o'clock, and the morning air felt fresh and sweet. Bertrand's mind was busy, and his face looked eager and intent, for he was thinking of two important things, and these things had been often in his mind during many months. Of himself and of his friend he is thinking as with quick, firm step he walks along.

'God has done so much for me, I am utterly ashamed to be doing nothing for Him,' is his thought concerning himself; and concerning Tresilian, he says 'He is far too good a fellow to be wasted. I'm quite sure Our Lord will have him yet.'

The great question, hitherto, has been *how* is he to do something for God? and how is Tresilian's being wasted to be prevented?

‘Sir Oswald at home, of course?’ he says to his friend’s valet, who answers his ring.

‘Oh yes, sir,’ the man replies with a faint smile. ‘You’ll find him in bed, sir; but you’ll walk up?’

Tempest said he would; and running lightly upstairs unannounced, he knocked with his stick at the door of a room on the first floor.

‘Who’s there?’ asked a sleepy voice from within. ‘Come in.’

Tempest went in, and was greeted from the bed by a lazy laugh and a stretch.

‘I might have known it was you; in fact, I *did* guess as much as soon as I was master of myself; no one else that ever I met gets up in the middle of the night.’

And Tresilian regarded his visitor with indolent wonder, as one might look at an interesting but fortunately rare animal of nocturnal habits.

‘Do you know,’ retorted Tempest, ‘that it is past nine o’clock?’

‘No, indeed I did not,’ responded Tresilian;

‘but I am very glad to hear it is so early ; and if you will kindly withdraw, I may be able to say that I have been up two days running before ten o’clock.’

Bertrand accordingly opened a door and passed into Sir Oswald’s sitting-room, where breakfast was not yet laid, but where there lingered a very strong remembrance of last night’s cigars.

‘Will you bring some breakfast as soon as possible ?’ he said to the man, who had lighted the fire, and was busily arranging and tidying the room.

‘Yes, sir ; directly, sir,’ the man answered, with another of his compromises between respect and merriment. ‘As soon as I saw you, I told them to hurry up.’

It took Tresilian a good while to dress, and would have taken longer but for a few indignant remonstrances from Bertrand, accompanied by sturdy thumps upon the door from his stick.

‘I wish you would come in here now and

talk while I am finishing dressing, instead of making that hideous clamour,' Sir Oswald said at last, when the remonstrances and thumpings became unusually loud. 'Poor old Bertrand,' he continued, with a half-repentant laugh, 'my manners and customs do upset you dreadfully, I know! If only you would send an equerry or something of that sort in advance, I would quit my pillow earlier on purpose to receive you in due form.' The young man was laughing, but he was half in earnest, too. He never cared for *this* friend to see any but his best side. 'I really was very late last night,' he added deprecatingly.

'I have no doubt you were,' Bertrand answered, with a laugh half serious, too, and half amused. 'You might as well tell me, in excuse for beating your wife, that you were drunk last night.'

'But I have not got a wife, nor should I beat her if I had,' retorted the incorrigible Tresilian. 'Don't put such absurd cases.'

Tempest laughed, and gave in, granting

himself beaten. He stuck to his point, however, like most people who are ~~beaten~~, and ~~said~~ :

‘ Well, it *is* horrid, you know, staying in bed all day, whatever you may say.’

‘ I know it is. No one regrets it more than I do,’ agreed Oswald, readily. ‘ My principles are perfect : my practice alone is defective.’



CHAPTER II.

TRESILIAN was dressed at last, and they were in his sitting-room.

‘Well, now, be quick and have your breakfast. It is nearly ten o’clock, and I have something for you to do when you are done,’ said Bertrand.

‘My dear person, I never breakfast: I couldn’t do it!’ Tresilian exclaimed with horror.

‘You do many worse things,’ said Bertrand. ‘Do try not to be absurd. Sit down and begin and finish.’

‘Now *you* are absurd!’ grumbled Oswald. ‘How *can* one begin and finish simultaneously?’

You devout people are always so unreasonable. I prefer a cigarette and some claret.'

Now Bertrand did not solemnly disclaim being devout or unreasonable either. It was not his way. Instead, he said quietly :

'Oswald, do you remember what day it is ?'

'No, indeed, my dear boy, I do not,' he answered, very innocently, for he knew perfectly what Bertrand meant. 'I never do know that sort of thing, but Gregg will tell us ;' and he pretended to be about to ring. 'It must be about the twenty-first, I should say ; but really——'

'Oswald, do stop. I don't in the least wish to consult Gregg about the day of the month. I mean,' he continued, lowering his voice a little, 'do you remember that it is Good Friday ?'

'Ah, so it is—what a coincidence! But why you call it *Good Friday* I never *can* conceive. I think it is the worst Friday in the year—Bank-holiday, I believe, and Sunday rolled into one——' He stopped at last. Bertrand

was looking rather disgusted. He pulled up short, and colouring slightly said : ‘But I interrupted you ; you were going to say something.’

‘I was going to ask you to do something with me ; but you have not touched your breakfast.’

‘Have *you* ?’ laughed his friend, who knew that Bertrand must be fasting.

‘I wish you would not be so tiresome to-day—I rather wish I had left you in bed.’

‘So do I. It was very wrong of you pulling me up, on Good Friday and all. Why, every shop-boy lies in bed to-day !’

‘But unfortunately,’ replied Tempest, getting up and putting on his hat, ‘you are not a shop-boy ; that is just where your argument fails.’

Sir Oswald laughed.

‘Get me a hat and some gloves, Gregg,’ he called out to the man who was moving about in the other room, putting another cigarette into his mouth, as he too got up and shook

himself into shape preparatory to going out.
' Why "*unfortunately*," Bertrand ?'

' Because I am tempted to think sometimes you would do more good in your generation if you were a shop-boy or a banker's clerk than a baronet !'

' Very likely,' the youth answered mildly, putting on the hat and taking the gloves from his servant ; ' doubtless I should work untold good to my fellows in either capacity : but Providence having refused me the chance of so distinguishing myself, I must give up all hope of being useful and decide on being comfortable instead. As you remarked, it is there that the argument fails.'

Bertrand had to laugh in spite of himself.

' You are really too tiresome, Oswald. Come along, if you are determined to breakfast on that smoke and claret ; we are late enough already.'

So they went downstairs, and turned to the left towards the Park, for a few moments neither of them saying anything.

‘Now, where are you leading me to?’ Sir Oswald asked presently, with a mischievous little twinkle in his bright eyes that late hours and dissipation had not had time to dim yet. ‘You will hardly forget that *I* should wish to attend Divine Service.’

‘So do I,’ Tempest replied rather curtly; ‘but *you* are coming with me to *mine*; that is, if you will.’

Sir Oswald shrugged his shoulders.

‘I am meek and go where I am taken, and do what I’m bid——’

‘Then try to be sensible,’ Bertrand interrupted, with one of his grave smiles.

‘Unreasonable again!’ cried Tresilian, lightly. But he took the advice to heart, and was silent for a while, wondering what his friend was thinking of him. Presently he put this wonderment into words. They had got into a hansom, and were driving quickly towards Kensington.

‘Bertrand, what do you think of me?’ he asked abruptly, turning to his friend with a

queer self-conscious expression on his good-looking face.

‘I was thinking,’ returned Tempest, candidly, ‘that you would be far nicer if you were a good deal different.’

‘How horrid of you ! But proceed ; do not let me cut your insults short for anything.’

‘I mean, you want altering a good deal.’

‘How odd ! Why, that’s just what Gregg says of my last coat——’

Tempest looked out of the side-window and bit his lip : Oswald stopped short ; he looked annoyed at himself, and said gravely :

‘Do go on, dear boy ; I really will try and amend. But what wants altering *most* ?’

‘Many things. My dear Oswald, you are worth rather more than all this. What is the good of wasting yourself ?’

Oswald was on the very point of affirming that there were no signs of wasting away yet to be seen in him ; but he remembered himself, and did not. Instead, he asked :

‘Worth more than all *what* ?’

‘All this nonsense of never doing a thing but dissipate: dancing, and drinking brandy and soda, and smoking till morning, and then lying in bed till noon.’

Tempest looked thoroughly in earnest, and Tresilian looked rather uncomfortable.

‘What a horrid rattling these windows make,’ he said parenthetically. Then: ‘But, my dear person, you surely do not think those three things *wicked*!’

‘Of course I don’t—in themselves. But what is the good of them—I mean as an existence, as a way of life?’

‘Recreation,’ the youth suggested with well-placed timidity. Bertrand ‘*snorted*,’ as Sir Oswald put it.

‘Recreation, indeed! Recreation after what?’

‘After the toils of the day,’ laughed Oswald, silyly.

Again words failed to express Tempest’s opinion of his friend’s defence.

‘I assure you nothing is so tiring as my kind of life,’ Tresilian asserted mischievously.

‘I quite believe it. Doing nothing is always tiring.’

‘Doing nothing!’ exclaimed Sir Oswald; ‘do you call it doing nothing to go to three at-homes in one afternoon, and then dine with a dowager-duchess—a dowager-duchess that is deaf and anything but dumb? Do you call it doing nothing to go thence to the play with cousins from the country, whose admiration is horribly violent and unrestrained?—and finally, to go to a ball, which lasts until five? Is that your notion of nothing?’

‘Nothing very profitable.’

‘I believe you—profitable indeed!’

Bertrand laughed: ‘You are a truly moderate and polite arguer—in fact you give in to my view.’

‘Well, but I *said* my life was tiring.’

‘And I did not deny it. But I do not see the sense of leading a tiring life for such ends.’

‘It’s a pleasant life enough—far pleasanter than making dull speeches to a sleepy House,

and flattering turnip-headed yokels to get there.'

They were both silent for a few moments. Then Bertrand said in a graver and more subdued tone :

' But I return to my original point. It may be a pleasant life enough, *I* should not enjoy it, but you are worth something better than that.'

' I'm not worth much,' the youth answered, with a disparaging laugh but a grave face.

They had reached the Catholic church to which Tempest had directed their driver to take them ; and as they got out, they said no more ; then, while walking up the narrow passage to the door, Bertrand said quietly and shyly :

' You were worth Our Lord's dying for you on the first Good Friday, Oswald.'



CHAPTER III.

THE Mass was drawing to an end, and the church was very full. But the two young men found a place where they could see and hear, on the gospel-side, a little west of the pulpit. Tresilian had seen a few Catholic functions before, but had never been present at the Good Friday Mass of the Præ-Sanctified.

The celebrant was a venerable man, a bishop, who for long years had never stirred from Our Lord's side or listened to any voice but His. To the young man there was something very pathetic in the demeanour of this servant of God, so intent on the great Act in which he

was engaged, and utterly void of self-conscious thought or distraction to trivial things.

From his pocket Tempest drew a small Holy Week book, and pointing to the place, gave it to his friend. At first Oswald looked round him to take in the place and the people. The church was large, for an English Catholic church, very large; and compared with the naked bareness of the churches frequented by Tresilian, it was beautiful too. The people were numerous and devout, mostly Catholic, though a good many Protestants were sprinkled among them; in the aisle and the gospel-side, they were even crowded, many standing, and many more sitting on the ground.

Sir Oswald could not help being struck by their demeanour: none looked bored, though some of the Protestants looked shy and self-conscious; no one seemed to be merely waiting and hoping for the end of the service in order to hurry away. Some were saying their beads, some using books, some praying with

bent heads, and some attending to the function with grave intentness.

Then, having taken in all this, Tresilian looked into his book and tried to make out what was going on. This he had no difficulty in doing, and he became very much absorbed, and no wonder. They had just reached the beginning of the Veneration of the Cross. That is, a deacon was just giving the veiled crucifix to the celebrant at the corner of the altar, and the celebrant had taken off his chasuble and stood in the alb alone with the Holy Cross in his hands. His eyes were fixed upon it, and then unveiling the head of it a little, he cried out :

‘*Ecce lignum Crucis !*’ and the assistants joined with him, ‘*Ecce lignum Crucis, in quo pependit Salus mundi*’—Behold the wood of the Cross, whereon hung the Saviour of the world.

‘*Venite adoremus*’—Come let us adore.

With all attention Tresilian watched, and a sudden chill seemed to run through him,

and a shudder as when one who has been cold draws near a fire; he was not consciously praying, but Our Lord was throwing around his heart those loving Arms of His, and drawing him, drawing him nearer and closer to Himself.

The people were all kneeling, and Tresilian too knelt down reverently and humbly: the bishop, with the Sacred Cross held up in his hands, came forward now to the front corner of the altar, and uncovered the right arm of the cross: with the same tremendous words, 'Ecce lignum Crucis!' louder than before.

The assistants again joined in the great appeal, and again knelt down as they sang, 'Venite adoremus.'

A third time was it all repeated; the bishop stood now before the midst of the altar, and holding high the Sacred Cross, unveiled it altogether as he said again:

'Behold the wood of the Cross! Ecce lignum Crucis!'

The heart of the young man softened as he looked, for he was generous and noble, and a great compassion for Jesus Christ came over him. Through his mind there came the echo of words he had often heard unheeding, 'I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto Me ;' and truly Our Lord, lifted up on the wood of the Cross, was drawing him that day. Those sweet Arms stretched out in anguish were thrown around his heart and thawing all the coldness from it ; the failing Eyes were fixed upon him, beseeching him to love ; and through the stricken Side shone out the rapturous love-flames of the Sacred Heart. 'Behold and see,' Our Lord was whispering to Him, 'if there be a sorrow like to My sorrow,' and the pitiful reproach was ringing in his ears, 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by ?'

He bowed his head and prayed—perhaps really for the first time : I cannot tell, probably he did not know himself, but certainly he had never so prayed before. Never before had he been face to face with Jesus Christ

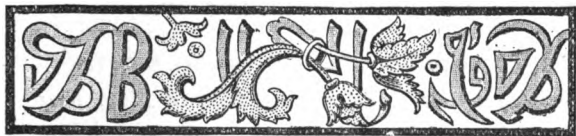
like that, pouring out his soul before Him and telling Him plainly everything.

‘It is quite true,’ he said—only to Our Lord, his lips did not move, no faintest whisper came from him in outward speech—‘it is all true that Oswald keeps telling me: I *am* wasting my life and myself, and not caring a bit that on the Cross You had to hang for my soul’s sake. It is all rubbish—chaff and empty husks, straw and stubble—this life of mine: it has no point and no end, it doesn’t lead to anything, and in itself it is good for nothing, I see all that. Only how am I to do better? What else should I turn to? “Lord, what wouldst Thou have me to do?” Do speak to me, quite plainly, for I am grown so that I can hardly hear Your voice at all; I am like a wretched sheep that has wandered so long that it cannot recognise any more the shepherd’s voice. Indeed, I will try to rise up and follow Thee. To rise up from my life and myself, and do just what is given me to do.’

And so he prayed: prayed well and with all his heart, asking just what he wanted to have, and speaking tenderly and humbly to Our Lord. Was such a prayer ever yet unheard?

And what of Tempest, meanwhile? Had the Cross whereon was hung the Saviour of the world done less for him?

No; he too was kneeling in prayer beside his friend: praying for him and praying for himself, with all the love and ruth of one who has found out how sweet it is to be intimate with Jesus Christ.



CHAPTER IV.

THE people were venerating the Cross. In long slow procession, if procession it could be called, the crowd was pressing up to the sanctuary, at the gate of which, upon a cushion, the Crucifix was laid.

And when Bertrand Tempest went out from his place to join the stream, Oswald did not stay behind. He too rose from his knees, and, following his friend, was slowly carried along behind him towards the altar.

Nothing ever makes us so devout as does devotion ; and Oswald Tresilian saw their devotion who went to kiss the Cross that day. On every face was a great sobriety, a deep

and intent gravity; and each one there who came and kissed the Awful Feet of Him who on the Cross had died for them, as he rose to return to his place, was subdued by the memory of that anguish of the stricken God. For who can let his mind rest on that unutterable and most awful mystery, the mystery of a dead and God-forsaken God, without his brain reeling and his heart staggering to think of it? No marvel if a few women weep, and if the lips of brave men quiver as they touch the symbol of that Ineffable Sorrow.

And with all his soul upon his lips, Oswald knelt before the Crucifix. An awe was upon him, so he hardly durst bend down to kiss the image of our God. 'I am a man of unclean lips, O Lord,' he murmured in his heart; but he too kissed the Holy Cross. 'Ecce lignum Crucis!' said the Holy Ghost to him; 'ecce in quo pependit Salus mundi!'

And to Tempest it seemed as though those lips of Christ were moving for him, and Our

Lord was saying to him, 'Come, the harvest is very plenteous, but the labourers are few.' Then, as he bent over the great Symbol, he loved Our Lord with an over-mastering love, and there was nothing he could deny Him. Nor did Oswald hold aloof.

'I, if I be lifted up,' the words rang in his ears, 'shall draw all men unto me;' and the arms of Christ were drawing him, he felt their pressure, and he could not fly from them away.

'Yes, I will come!' he murmured; 'I will not be distrustful or afraid. I cannot keep away; only hold me, draw me, *pull* me closer and closer and closer, Lord.'



CHAPTER V.

THEY were outside the church, and walking slowly and thoughtfully home. Until they were in the Park, where it was comparative solitude and calm, they did not speak.

‘Oswald,’ said Tempest, quietly, ‘you *must* come to us. Our Lord wants you, and you need Him. You will never manage without Him; and you will never find Him as you are.’

Tresilian did not answer, but his silence was far from saying ‘Nay.’

For a little while both were again occupied with their own thoughts, too much for words. Then Tempest said earnestly :

‘Will you come with me to see some one?’

‘Who is it?’

‘A priest—more than a priest. I will not tell you any more. But he will help you. I don’t mean this minute, but sometime soon; to-night, to-morrow say.’

‘I will go. Let us go and see him to-night.’

And they went. He was at home, and would see them. Tempest went up first to tell their errand.

‘I am come to bring some one to you, my lord,’ he said, when he had knelt to kiss his friend and father’s hand.

Perhaps it was what we call chance; perhaps the great ecclesiastic was quick at reading minds in faces, or perhaps it was merely that the thing was near his heart; but he said, smiling:

‘When are you coming to bring me yourself?’

‘Very soon, perhaps,’ the boy answered with a slight flush, but honestly and simply.

‘God bless you, dear boy,’ the other answered, ‘and bring you very close to Himself. Now tell me of your friend.’

It did not take long, the story was so simple ; then Tempest went down and brought Oswald to his friend.

‘Sit down, Sir Oswald,’ the latter said with his wonderful sweet smile ; ‘and you, Bertrand, may vanish.’



CHAPTER VI.

WELL, now, what is it ?' asked the ecclesiastic, when they were alone and he had made the young man sit down opposite to him. He smiled again as he spoke ; but he was very much in earnest, and for the time seemed to have forgotten everything else in the world except the visitor that had been brought to him.

Oswald laughed a little nervously, but his honest eye met those of his companion very fearlessly, and he said :

' I can't tell you like that—straight off. I hoped *you* would have something to say to *me*. I hardly know what to say to you. In-

deed, I am not sure that I have anything to say.' He paused a moment or two, and looked into the fire ; then turning again to his companion, saw him looking amused, though still in hearty earnest.

'You want to make me understand that it was your friend that brought you ?'

'Yes,' replied Oswald, rather doubtfully.

'But that you would not have come unless you had yourself chosen to do so,' the other added.

Oswald nodded, and agreed thoroughly to this.

'Well, now,' continued his host, 'tell me this. Why do you suppose Mr. Tempest wanted to bring you ? I will not say, Why did you come ?'

'I suppose he thought it would do me good.'

'And you—you consent to be done good to, provided it really is good ?'

Sir Oswald said certainly he consented to that, that was why he came—on the chance.

‘Now, we have got a great way,’ said the ecclesiastic; ‘it is half the victory to get you to confess that, to get you to say you are willing to do yourself good if we can show you how.’ He paused a minute, and looked into the young man’s face in grave silence: then, ‘Which is worth most,’ he asked, ‘that which lasts a little while, or that which must last for ever?’

Oswald answered as one could only answer.

‘And yet,’ returned the older man, ‘our life here is very short: the other life is very long—it will *never* end. And there is no choice of *living on then or stopping*: we *must* go on living, the only question is how? We may be for ever so happy that we cannot picture that joy to ourselves; *or else we must be* so miserable that I cannot speak to you, my dear boy, of that ineffable horror and anguish. Why did Jesus Christ hang on the Cross for three hours, until He died, as on this day eighteen centuries ago?’

‘That we might have the happy life, that we

might get to heaven,' the young man answered simply.

'Right. But how? How was that anguish on the Cross to save us from the other anguish? How were the benefits of this day to be applied to us? By whom?' Oswald was silent. 'By whose ministry, I mean?' the other added.

'I suppose of the Church.'

'Surely. And was the world to wait fifteen centuries for the appearance of that Church? Was the whole World—*orbis terrarum*—to wait for the coming of the Church of England?'

'Do you mean,' the boy asked, 'that it was the Church of Rome he founded?'

'I do indeed,' the other replied very simply, 'the Church of Rome; the one Catholic Church of which Rome is the centre, indeed, but the whole world the territory.'

'But,' the young man said hesitatingly, 'I could not believe the things you teach. They seem absurd.'

'And yet I can believe them.'

Oswald laughed : it was certainly an answer. How could he, a boy of twenty-three who had never troubled his head about religion at all, have the face to say a thing was too absurd for belief which that old man opposite, whose name all Europe knew, whose head was the envy of phrenologists, did not find beneath him.

‘ Well now, an instance ? ’ asked the priest.

For a moment or two Oswald was silent, he was ashamed to bring some of the accusations that rose to his memory. The calm sincerity of the servant of God forbade it.

‘ The Real Presence,’ he said at last. ‘ Surely that is impossible.’

‘ You say so. Our Lord says not. It is a question of authority : Catholics prefer Our Lord’s.’

Sir Oswald had no reply to make ; the other went on :

‘ Sir Oswald, you could hardly tell me I was a liar if I were to tell you something, very extraordinary even, about *myself*. For two reasons : first, you would not so insult an old

man, and a priest ; then besides, you would say, It's odd, but after all he must know best about himself !'

' Certainly.'

' Well, but don't you see,' the priest continued, ' that is just what you do to Our Lord. He says, " This is Mybody." You say, " Oh no, it isn't ;" and then you go on to tell Him that the thing is absurd : that Jesus Christ is talking nonsense. My dear boy, how do you dare to do it ?'

The priest spoke very gravely, and as one who felt his words : he really was afraid at such presumption.

' But,' objected Oswald, ' Our Lord was not speaking literally.'

' You must prove that,' said the priest. ' There is every reason for taking His words literally : the time, the place, the occasion, the manner—all point to a solemn and literal truth.'

' Do you take His words literally then, when He says, " I am the door " ?'

' Most literally.'

Oswald was thunder-struck.

‘Do you mean to say,’ he asked slowly and incredulously, ‘that Jesus Christ *is a door*?’

‘I did not say that : He did not say He was “a door,” but I believe Him when He tells me He is “the door.” I do not mean that Our Lord is a collection of planks nailed together, with a lock and key and hinges : nor did He mean that.’

‘Then you *don’t* take the words literally.’

‘Yes, I do : but you misunderstand us and them. I believe very really that Our Lord is a door, the door through which all who would enter heaven must pass ; but *you* cannot understand how a door can be anything else but wood and iron. You are so merely natural. What is a door?’

‘A thing by which you enter a place.’

‘Exactly ; don’t you see now that it is you who misunderstand Him, not we who are absurd?’

Oswald laughed.

‘Your objection about the door is a very old

one,' the priest continued. 'I had thought, indeed, it was quite worn out. It *might* have been a very good one, but as a matter of fact it is no good. For two reasons: first of all, it professes to be a parallel case, and is not a parallel case; and then again, it would have been very nice if only Our Lord had said something quite different from what He did say.'

'But surely it is a parallel case, isn't it?' Oswald objected, rather afraid of his ground, and yet loath to lose a grip of his argument. 'In the one case He says, "I am the door;" in the other case——'

The priest laughed; it was very amusing, Oswald was too sharp not to see the trap he was laying for himself.

'In the other case,' said the priest, 'He does *not* say, "I am the loaf." That is just it. Your parallel would be very nice if we said that Jesus Christ in the Holy Eucharist becomes a loaf; but we do not; we only believe Him when He tells that what was bread becomes His Body.'

Oswald thought this over a moment or two, and then said candidly :

‘I see ; you are right. It is no *parallel* ; the cases are exactly *opposite*.’

‘Certainly. The other day a gentleman—I hope he is a very *young* gentleman—wrote to the newspapers about me and something he imagined I had said. Now, what do you think *he* said ? He said, “ Since —— worships a bit of bread because our Saviour said, taking bread, “ ‘This is My Body,’ ” I wonder does he worship his front-door because, on another occasion, Jesus said to His disciples, “ I am the door.” Now, Sir Oswald, what do you think of that ?’

‘I think it was horribly vulgar,’ the young man replied warmly.

‘You are quite right. And besides, it was exceedingly silly. You see, good Mr. Sanderson first of all makes a false statement : he says I worship a bit of bread ; now, it is just because I believe that the Host is not bread at all that I do worship it. Then he falls into the jaws of

the false parallel : there is no real connection between the first half and the second half of his remark. Because in the first place Our Lord did say, "taking bread," "*This is My Body ;*" but in the second instance He did *not* take a door and say, "This is Myself."'



CHAPTER VII.

AFTER this, Sir Oswald and his new friend met often, and had many talks. More and more each time the young man grew to be at ease with the priest; their conversations were always so simple, so quiet and close, and so earnest, that Oswald was quite surprised at himself to see how thoroughly he could enter into subjects of this kind. Had the friend to whom Tempest introduced him been either undecided and hesitating on the one hand, or less calm and patient on the other, he {would [soon]} have either wearied or frightened Oswald.

But while he never wavered for a moment

in showing with the most perfect candour that he knew himself, or rather his Church, to be right and all else wrong, while he clearly expected Oswald to set himself to learn, not once did he suffer his zeal to outrun discretion ; not once did he fall into the mistake of trying to *shoulder* Oswald into the Church by pooh-poohing his objections instead of answering them.

One day the young man said, laughingly :

‘ You must not suppose, my lord, that I am the same sort of fellow as Tempest. I never was a bit High Church, you know.’

The priest smiled too.

‘ Do you think,’ he asked, ‘ that Our Lord wants *no* one but High Churchmen ? If that were so, the kingdom of heaven would be a very small principality indeed.’

‘ I meant,’ said Oswald, ‘ that I have no *previous* training. You can’t afford to take anything for granted in instructing me.’

‘ Even that has its advantages : at least there will be little weeding before one can begin to plant.’

Then Oswald explained further that not only had he been utterly without taste for ecclesiastical pursuits, but he had never troubled himself much about religion at all.

‘My dear boy,’ the priest answered, ‘I know well what you mean : and Our Lord has been wonderfully good to you, do not forget it. You made no efforts at all to go to Him, so He just came to look after you. You now must do what you can to make up for lost time. Try to be very much in earnest, try to be very *simple*, and determine with all your might to pray.’

‘But it is so hard,’ the young man answered ; ‘it is like a foreign language.’

‘Just like. And as the only way to get used to a foreign language is to talk much in it, so you must pray much in order that you may learn to pray. Now, I am busy, so you must go away. Talk much of all this to God, and do not talk at all of it to anyone else.’

So Sir Oswald knelt down and kissed his

friend's hand, receiving his blessing, and then went out.

Next time they met, Tresilian said to the priest :

‘ My lord, Tempest is always asking me what I am going to do—whether I will not try to do some work.’

‘ And *I* am always wondering about it,’ his friend replied with one of his marvellous smiles; ‘ you must be nearly dead of idleness.’

Oswald reddened slightly, and said :

‘ The only thing I ever thought of was the army.’

‘ Well, and why *not* the army ?’

‘ You think it would be good for me ?’

‘ I think it a *beautiful vocation* if you will take it as such. It is more like the priesthood than any other calling is—only the priest has a greater King to fight for, and the priest is *always* in action; for him there is neither peace nor truce : he must always be in a state of siege, even while he is himself besieging and invading.’

And after this they often talked it over, till ultimately it was decided upon and the matter arranged.

This gave Sir Oswald a good deal to do ; and he and Tempest were very busy during a few weeks, having interviews of all kinds with all sorts of people, from under-secretaries of state to military tailors.

A few days before the young man joined his regiment, he had a talk with his friend—hardly new friend now—the priest.

‘ When may I become a Catholic ? ’ he asked abruptly.

‘ You are determined to be a Catholic then some day ? ’

‘ Of course ; but when ? ’

‘ As soon as you tell me that you should be afraid to die as you are ; as soon as you are convinced of these three things—first, that Our Lord did found a visible Church ; second, that His Church still exists ; and third, that the Church to which we belong,

and that alone, is the Church so founded and so existing now.'

'I believe all that now,' the young man said eagerly. 'I could not die outside the Church; why should I go on living outside it?'

'There is no reason,' his friend answered; and so it was decided.

'Go and tell Tempest,' said the priest, as soon as it was settled, 'and come back here with him to-night.'



CHAPTER VIII.

SO Sir Oswald went to see his friend, and to tell him the news.

When he had knocked at the door of Tempest's room, and been told to come in, he could hardly contain himself for joy. Was it really true? Was *he* to be a Catholic, and so soon, in a few hours, perhaps that very day? Was he, too, to have the wonderful possession that he had often envied even when he did not understand? What would Tempest say? They had never spoken about these things since the morning of Good Friday. By a sort of tacit agreement silence had been observed on the subject nearest to both their hearts.'

Tempest was reading in the window : it was one of those rare days, bright and warm, that come in May to Protestant England to remind her that even here it is the month of Mary. All the sky was spread with Our Lady's blue robe, only girded with a narrow cloud-belt of glistening white. The fields in the far-away country-places were strewn with flowers for her to pass along ; the birds were singing in her praise the Canticle of Canticles, in lonely woods and solitary copses, down by clear streams where the ousels dart and glide. And here, in the open window, sat one of Our Lady's children reading of her glories, and with his heart on fire with love.

He looked up as the door opened, and closed the book reluctantly.

‘ Well, Oswald, where do you want to take me now ? ’

‘ To ——'s chapel. ’

Tempest jumped up. He came and laid his hands on Oswald's shoulder, and looked eagerly into his face.

‘Do you mean it?’ he asked with joyful incredulity.

Oswald did not answer; they were both unutterably glad. There was a great light shining in their eyes, upon their faces, and a great flood of gratitude overflowing from their hearts. They could hardly speak, and their eyes were bright with the brightness of happy tears. For a moment they stood thus, and Tempest cried fervently:

‘Until the daybreak, and the shadows flee away . . . Quid enim est bonum ejus! Quid enim ejus pulchrum! . . . O my dear Oswald, I can only say I am glad—I can only say, thank God; but indeed I feel more.’

And Oswald could not say even that. He was silent, with a happy joyous silence. So they crossed over to the window, and sat down to look out. Hundreds of people were passing in the bright May sunshine, all eager and intent—some on business, some on pleasure, some, perhaps, on God.

Tempest’s lips were moving, and he whispered:

‘ How long, O Lord, how long ! Not to us two only, but to all ! Let none of all these be wasted . . . Who shall give Thee thanks in the pit ?’ Then for a moment he was silent, or at least his lips did not move.

Then turning his eyes on a picture over the fireplace, a picture of Fra Angelico’s, where to Our Lady comes the Archangel with that tremendous message from the Holy Ghost, her Spouse, the young man said eagerly:

‘ “ Memor sis quod Anglia
Dicta fuit dos tua
Et tuum imperium.” ’*

For awhile they sat together, for the most part in silence, but now and then talking a little. Then they rose to return to their friend, and went down into the street among all those others who had no notion at all of what it was that was filling these young men with happiness to-day. Passing a church, they went in for a few minutes. After kneeling for awhile before Our Lord to give Him thanks, they went for a moment or two to the ‘ May-

* ‘ Be mindful that England was called thy dowry and thy realm.’

altar,' where some children were praying to their Mother. They had no other, and so she had to be all the more to them; and lastly, Oswald turned aside into a dim corner where there hung a great 'Mission Cross.'

At the foot of it was kneeling a ragged, miserable old woman, but her face was very happy-looking, and she did not take much notice of the two young men; presently she stooped down and kissed the horrible huge nails that were driven through Our Saviour's feet into the Cross, and then arose and went away.

Oswald and Tempest came nearer, and after praying for a few minutes, the former whispered to himself:

'O lignum Crucis! Ecce in quo pependit Salus mundi. Ecce per quod ad Christi amorem advenio.' 'O wood of the Cross! Behold on what the Saviour of the world once hung! Behold through what I draw near to the love of Christ!'

Then he, too, bowing down his head, kissed with tender love the wood of the Holy Cross.



CHAPTER IX.

THAT evening Sir Oswald passed into the Church of God. I cannot try to tell you of his joy, because for that sort of happiness I know no words—there is no speech. And they wished him joy very briefly.

‘God has done very much; try on your part to do a little,’ the priest said, as he laid his hand on the young man’s shoulder. ‘You are a Catholic, be a good one; and do not be selfish, do not be content that *you* should have all this great treasure, “*gratis accepisti da gratis.*”’

‘To-day is only the beginning, not the end,

Tempest said earnestly. 'We converts are always forgetting that. And so we miss half the beauty and the glory. You know only the rudiments yet; don't let that content you. *Steep yourself* in Catholicity, and let it change you from head to foot; if we do not do this we are like a man inheriting a vast realm, who will only live in the cellars of his home and see only what is within sight of those cellar windows.'

Sir Oswald smiled.

'I will explore,' he said simply. 'I know there is plenty to see and hear.'

'Indeed there is,' replied his friend, fervently. 'I trust that I did not come into the Church a day before I was ready; and yet when I look back to those first days of light and knowledge, I can hardly believe it is I who have changed so much.'

'You mean, I suppose, in *appreciating* things?'

'Yes, but not only that: there are some people, they say, who become Catholics, and

never move forward from the point to which their sheer conversion brought them. I can't understand it. I can't understand how anyone can help *growing* in Catholicity ; there are so many new lovelinesses, so many unsuspected rays of light flowing from infinite truths, that every week alters one, every week helps to build up a great and wonderful fabric all around one.'

Tempest was very much in earnest, but he seemed to be only half talking to his friend—he was rather *expressing himself* literally, than engaging in dialogue.

'Well,' he said, pulling himself up short, 'you will not be one of those, I am sure ; you will hardly waste what is given to you. I don't know when we shall meet again ; but whenever we do, and wherever it is, we must both of us be altered much. You will find yourself gradually change, without any intention or self-consciousness, and I too must go on *growing out of myself*.'

They were silent for a few moments. Then

Sir Oswald turned to his friend, not without a certain shyness, and said quietly :

‘Have not *you* something to tell me, Tempest ? I have seen it trembling on your lips often, and then you have changed your mind. Why ?’

‘Simply because it was too indefinite ; but you are right—I hope to be a priest.’

Sir Oswald sighed. Then, as though afraid of being mistaken, said immediately :

‘Don’t think I am unsympathetic. I know you are very glad and very thankful ; indeed I too am glad.’ Then he added, smiling : ‘You still keep ahead of me ; first as Catholic, now as priest. That is as it should be.’

In a month, Tempest was at work in the seminary, and Sir Oswald was with his regiment. Their ways lay henceforth far apart, and they were sorry to say good-bye ; but they knew well it was best. Our Lord had given them different works to do, but neither forgot that the work he had *was* given him by Jesus Christ ; and each felt without any doubt

that where his work lay, there it was best for him to be.

‘Good-bye, Tempest ; I know you will succeed. I trust I may ; in some ways my work is harder than yours—harder to use properly.’

‘I know it is ; and *I* could not succeed in it ; I make no doubt you will. We are different, and so, you see, it is quite right we should not have the same kind of life to lead. Good-bye,’ he said ; ‘you are changing already. It sounds an unkind thing to say to my old friend, but still I say it—Go on changing, and you will be happier every day.’ And so they went their way.

‘He is right,’ Sir Oswald said to himself ; ‘I know I am changed—am changing.’

He felt taken out of himself in one sense, and thrust in upon himself in another ; that is, he no longer felt alone, though he had few friends left. He felt more like one of a great community ; one with the interests not of himself merely, but of the whole community,

at heart. His own private aims, his day-dreams and plans for his own future, were all dwarfed and thrown into insignificance ; while, on the other hand, he felt the peace and calm of what we call ‘recollection.’ He was no longer whirled along, almost involuntarily, in a crowd. He had time to think and pray and to look at himself, not in the looking-glass, but in the light of God’s knowledge of him—to see how he stood with God. In a word, he had changed from dissipation to calmness and repose. It was not that he was *blasé*. Life seemed to the young soldier far better worth living now than it had done three months ago, when his sole thought was how to make it interesting and pleasant.

‘It is very wonderful this Catholic religion. I cannot understand it ; but it is very beautiful and fresh and wholesome.’



CHAPTER X.

AND what came of them? How was ended the work begun on that Good Friday morning at the Adoration of the Cross?

I will tell you: just in a few words, and for the rest you must weave for yourselves a longer, more interesting history.

In three years Tempest was a priest, and I will tell you what he was doing on the Good Friday after that again—four years from the Good Friday when he took his friend to Mass.

It is a very hard and very noble life, the life of a mission priest. Work, toilsome and

unending, from morning till late evening, in crowded city streets and lanes, among God's poorest, most miserable children. And it is very beautiful—so lovely a life that I cannot even tell you in words its beauty and its glory. Jesus Christ has called them His friends, fellow-workers, and this itself makes it all so exquisite. To think of men and God toiling together! with the same end in view, in the same field, with the same means; to think of men identifying themselves in this way with God, so that they have no objects in life at all except whatever may be God's object; so that there is no reward to be gained, no goal reached, no triumph won, except the reward of being familiar friends of God, as a man is a friend to his fellow-man, except the goal of endless joyful union with Him, except God's triumph over His enemies.

This was Father Tempest's life now: this that was so like the Stations of the Cross. Daily saving Jesus Christ from being condemned to death by His children; daily toiling with steadfast upturned gaze beneath the

heavy Cross: falling well-nigh into despair over and over again; and then meeting Mary's tender glance on the way, bidding him be brave and struggle on: 'meeting his mother' and pouring out his sorrow at her knee. Then, like Simon, bearing the Cross, relieving Our Lord a while; or like Veronica, wiping from that dear Face the sweat and tears and blood. Weeping over Him, and then weeping over himself, over his failings and comings-short, over himself and his children, his poor sins which were, he felt, all he had ever brought forth, all of which he had been fruitful. Stripped of all for Jesus Christ's sake, of name and ease and friends; without home and without fame; empty of everything that makes the gladness of a young man's life. And last of all, buried with God in the grave: away, out of sight and hearing of all he had ever known or loved, by himself with Jesus Christ.

And so he was full of joy and peace. And to him we say farewell, to him wish we 'good luck in the Name of the Lord.'

And what of Oswald? Where was he on this Good Friday afternoon?

Very far away on a wide plain where the dreary rains fell sad and silently, where the winds moaned and made lamentation, the young soldier lay still and dead. He too had fought bravely and well 'for God and for the king.' And so though he was fallen he was not conquered, and all was well. He had grown quickly day by day, and had gone from strength to strength, making all love him and hold him in esteem: deeming it a sacred charge to make the name of 'Catholic' a fair and goodly thing among them: gay and happy-hearted, he had been kindly and sweet to all, and laughter was very often on his lips and in his eyes. But from his lips came never any foulness such as is thought wit, none ever heard him say what Our Lady would have blushed to hear; and in all things he had been true to God and to her—his King and Queen. Yet none had ever dreamed of calling him 'pious' in scorn: he had no saints'

airs, or gloom, and he spoke no ill of any-one.

So, many grieved now to find him lying dead; not alone the wild and melancholy breezes made lamentation over him as he lay; not only the desolate grey ocean was sad; not only the lowering heavens overcast.

And yet it was well. Only the body of the goodly young man lay there face upward on the grass, pale and very still: Our Lord had taken his soul away, and the victory was won. Oh that we now, we too were safe with the journey done.

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